Missing Package intro on-shot

Overview:

The driver Cole Howard Riley was doing a delivery from Portland, OR to Klamath Falls, OR. But he never got to end his delivery.

Cole's delivery route:

Date: June 22, 1993
Route: Portland, OR → Klamath Falls, OR
Vehicle: White Ford Econoline
Cargo: Sealed educational shipment
Planned drive time: ~7 hours

Cole departs a logistics warehouse in **Portland** at approximately **06:30**, bound for **Klamath Falls** via the Cascade corridor. The run includes two scheduled stops and no planned detours.
At **08:45**, Cole checks in briefly at a regional facility in **Eugene** for paperwork and a rest stop. Witnesses describe him as polite, tired, and unremarkable.
At **11:15**, he refuels near **Oakridge**, asking the attendant to confirm he is still on the correct route. He leaves without incident.
At approximately **14:30**, Cole makes an **unscheduled stop** in **Stillwater**, a small town along OR-58. He sits at the local diner, orders coffee, drinks only part of it, and makes a short phone call from a payphone. Staff recall no distress, only hesitation. This stop does not appear on his

route sheet.
At **15:20**, Cole leaves Stillwater heading east, continuing toward the Cascades instead of turning back. Sometime after **16:00**, he turns onto an unmarked **Forest Service road** east of Willamette Pass.
Cole never reached **Klamath Falls**.

> Route secondaire utilisable
> Nom réaliste :
> -FS Road 19
> -FS Road 21
> -Salmon Creek Road
> Ces routes existent partout dans les Cascades.

What happened to Cole

Cole Howard Riley reached Stillwater in the early afternoon, later than planned but not alarmingly so. The delay began with a missed turn somewhere west of Oakridge, the kind of small mistake that forces a driver to question their sense of direction without truly alarming them. He stopped at the diner on the main road, ordered a coffee, and sat long enough to drink only part of it. When he stood up, the coffee was still warm.

From the payphone outside, he called his company and explained that he would be late, blaming unclear signage and a wrong turn. His tone was calm, almost apologetic, and he assured them he would make up the time. There was no panic in his voice, only the mild embarrassment of someone who felt they should have known better. After the call, he returned to his truck and continued east on Route 58.

A few miles past town, he pulled into a small roadside station. The place was quiet. One other person was there, local, unremarkable, someone who blended easily into the surroundings. They spoke briefly about the road ahead, nothing unusual, nothing urgent. As Cole prepared to leave, the other person said, absentmindedly, “You can keep going a little.” Cole did not respond properly. Perhaps he nodded. Perhaps he gave an answer that did not quite address what was said. Perhaps he said nothing at all. It was not overtly rude, but it was incomplete, the kind of moment that lingers because it was never resolved.

So he kept driving. In his mind, the decision felt reasonable. Turning around would meant explaining himself again, admitting uncertainty twice, creating awkwardness for no real reason. Continuing forward felt simpler. He told himself he would stop at the next place, the next clear landmark, the next opportunity to ask someone else. Each time he passed a crossroads, a house half-hidden by trees, or a sign pointing vaguely into the forest, he made the same choice. Not yet. A little farther. Just a bit more. None of these decisions felt important on their own. There was no panic, no sense of being lost, only a growing reluctance to stop without a clear

justification. Eventually the road narrowed, the pavement giving way to gravel as the forest closed in on both sides.

When he reached the forest service road, he slowed and turned off, expecting it to lead somewhere—another turnout, another opportunity to stop cleanly and put the moment behind him. Instead, the road ended abruptly. A locked gate blocked further travel, the kind used to close off seasonal routes, unremarkable and final. The pressure to keep moving did not lift. Stopping there, turning back, or sitting in the truck felt wrong in a way he could not articulate. He parked the vehicle neatly on the shoulder, left the keys inside, and did not touch the cargo. With no clear destination left to drive toward, Cole stepped around the gate and continued on foot, following the road as it narrowed and disappeared into the trees. He was never seen again.

Stillwater

> "When you reach Stillwater from OR-58, the change is subtle enough that you almost miss it.*
> *The highway drops slightly and the forest opens just enough to reveal a narrow valley, pinched between two wooded slopes. Pines and firs climb both sides of the mountains in dense, orderly ranks, their trunks straight and dark, their upper branches lost in mist. The mountains aren't dramatic. They don't announce themselves. They simply sit there, close on either side, as if the road had been allowed through on the condition that nothing else would follow.*
> *Stillwater exists in the space that remains.*
>
> *The road doesn't turn into a street so much as relax into one. Pavement stays pavement. There's no sign saying you've arrived until you're already there. Buildings appear along the roadside in a short, tidy line: a diner with wide windows, a post office, a small elementary school, a few houses with clean yards. Everything faces inward, toward the road, toward each other. There's no sprawl, no extra space, no sense that the town ever meant to be bigger than this.*
> *Every side street curves back toward trees. Backyards end where the forest begins. From anywhere in town, the slopes are visible, rising gently but persistently, closing off the horizon. Even when you're not looking at them, you're aware they're there.*
>
> *A wooden sign sits near the edge of the road, simple and well maintained:*
> ***STILLWATER Drive Carefully.***
> *It looks like it's been repainted many times, always the same color, always the same words. A smiling sticker on it has been added to it.*
>
> *People notice you as you pass. Not all at once, not obviously. Someone walking a dog glances up and nods. A woman outside the diner meets your eyes and raises a hand in a brief, practiced wave. The acknowledgment feels automatic, as if it's part of the landscape.*

> *Nobody stares. Nobody ignores you. You've been registered, politely, and then dismissed.*
> *The town feels sheltered. Not hidden, exactly, and not trapped just held in place. Like a pause between two long stretches of forest road.*
> *The highway continues straight through Stillwater, threading the gap between the slopes. It would be easy to keep driving. There's nothing here demanding your attention.*
> *And yet, for a moment, it feels as though the town is aware that you have arrived."*
>
>
>

How Stillwater Works

Stillwater does not control people. It does not issue commands, manifest physically, or confront anyone directly. Nothing in the town behaves in a way that can be proven unnatural. There are no rituals, no leaders, no enforcement apparatus. Instead, Stillwater functions as a **self-correcting social environment**.
In this town, politeness is not a custom. It is the default state. People acknowledge one another, respond when addressed, return greetings, and smooth over minor discomforts automatically. These behaviors are so consistent that they stop being noticeable. Visitors tend to follow them instinctively, the same way they match walking pace in a crowd or lower their voice in a library. Problems arise only when something is left unresolved.

An unanswered greeting, an abrupt departure, a refusal to engage, a moment of visible irritation, these are not punished immediately. Instead, they create a kind of *social imbalance*. The person who caused it feels subtle pressure to correct the situation. This pressure does not feel external. It manifests as discomfort, second-guessing, and a growing sense that stopping, staying, or confronting the issue would be worse than moving on.

Stillwater does not escalate quickly. The first correction is always minor and easily rationalized: a small accident, a delay, an inconvenience, a moment of embarrassment. If the imbalance

persists, the corrections become more consequential, but never dramatic. Nothing happens that couldn't plausibly be explained as bad luck or personal error.

Crucially, Stillwater does not pursue. If someone removes themselves completely, by leaving town, avoiding further interaction, or drifting out of the social space, the pressure stops. The town does not chase people down. It does not need to.

Cole Riley did not violate a rule. He failed to resolve a moment. Each decision he made afterward felt reasonable on its own. Taken together, they carried him out of the town and into isolation, where the system no longer needed to act.

Stillwater Social Consequence System

Social Escalation Ladder

Core Principle:

> Stillwater does not punish.
> Stillwater corrects unresolved social friction.
> Every stage offers a graceful way back.

🟢 Level 0 — Stable State

Situation	Outcome
Politeness maintained	No consequences
Greetings returned	Interactions feel smooth
Awkward moments addressed	Tension fades naturally
Visible effort to adapt	Locals become quietly helpful

NPC Behavior:
Relaxed, routine, friendly without enthusiasm. People acknowledge the PCs and move on.

🟡 Level 1 — Micro-Correction (Very Mild)

Trigger:
Ignoring a greeting, dismissive tone, abrupt exit from an interaction.
Delay:
30–90 minutes later. Never immediate.

Possible Consequences	NPC Reactions
A drink spills or tips over	Someone steps in quickly with napkins
A misstep causes a light twist or stumble	Concerned looks, soft questions
A door closes harder than expected	Apologetic glances from bystanders
Brief nosebleed or headache	“That happens sometimes.”

NPC Tone:
Sympathetic, reassuring. No blame.

> “That’s unfortunate. Are you okay?”

Recovery:
A simple apology, smile, or resolved interaction returns the PC to Level 0.

🟠 Level 2 — Pattern Noticed

Trigger:
Repeated small breaches, visible resistance, joking about local manners.
Delay:
Within the same half-day.

Possible Consequences	NPC Reactions
A ladder shifts, a step gives way	Someone warns *just* too late
A minor car bump or fender scrape	Locals insist on checking everyone
Sudden migraine or disorientation	People speak more slowly to the PC
Tools or equipment fail at a bad moment	Quiet concern replaces friendliness

NPC Tone:
Careful, tense, still polite.

> “You really should be more careful here.”

Recovery:
Accepting help or showing effort reduces escalation to Level 1 after time passes.

🔵 Level 3 — Social Intervention

Trigger:
Persistent refusal to adapt, passive hostility, deliberate withdrawal.

Interventions	NPC Behavior
Excessive friendliness	Smiles linger too long
Frequent check-ins	“Just making sure you’re alright.”
Forced small talk	Conversations block exits
Insistence on accompaniment	Someone walks with the PC
Invitations hard to refuse	Framed as concern, not control

NPC Tone:
Warm, worried, protective.

> “You don’t seem like yourself today.”
> “We’ll stay with you for a bit.”

Recovery:
Accepting company and conforming temporarily drops the PC back to Level 1.

🔴 Level 4 — Severe Correction

Trigger:
Open defiance, provocation, violence, or attempts to “break” the system.

Possible Consequences	NPC Reactions
A heavy branch falls nearby	Shocked silence
A fire starts from a small mistake	Immediate, calm response
Sudden medical emergency	Efficient assistance
Someone else is hurt nearby	Gentle but firm blame

NPC Tone:
Disappointed, restrained, certain.

> “These things don’t just happen here.”
> “You should have been more careful.”

Note:
Nothing appears supernatural. Every event is plausible.

Exiting the System

PC Action	Result
Leaving Stillwater	Pressure stops completely
Avoiding interaction	Escalation stalls
Returning later	Partial reset
Returning unchanged	Escalation occurs faster

> Stillwater never pursues. The town only responds to presence.

What Stillwater Might Be

There is no confirmed entity operating in Stillwater. No investigation was formally opened, no dedicated research was conducted, and no agency has ever claimed jurisdiction over the town. What exists are fragments: observations made in passing, anomalies noted and then set aside, details that never quite justified a closer look.

Stillwater sits within a narrow valley, bordered by forested slopes that limit airflow, sound dispersion, and line of sight. At the edge of town is a regional electrical substation whose size exceeds what the local population appears to require. Public records list it as part of a broader grid redundancy and weather-hardening effort. Nothing about it is officially unusual, and no documentation suggests active experimentation or restricted access.

Some have speculated, informally, that the area may be subject to low-level electromagnetic or infrasonic effects generated unintentionally by infrastructure or geography. Such phenomena have been theorized to influence mood, perception, and behavioral repetition without rising to conscious awareness. In Stillwater, this could manifest as heightened sensitivity to social disruption, an increased drive toward completion, and discomfort when interactions remain unresolved. These ideas were never tested and never pursued.

Technology in the area exhibits mild irregularities: devices fail in small, inconvenient ways, rarely catastrophically. The effect appears inconsistent and easily attributed to rural conditions, weather, or chance. Residents accept this without comment. Visitors notice it more often, but only briefly.

If Stillwater is the product of an abandoned program, a natural resonance, or a coincidence of environment and habit, no evidence remains to support any single explanation. The phenomenon does not expand, does not escalate, and does not persist beyond the town's boundaries. People who leave experience no lasting effects.

Stillwater does not act with intent. It does not respond to inquiry or pressure. It simply continues to function, quietly smoothing what passes through it.

Cole Riley was not selected or targeted. He remained in the area long enough, and uncertainly enough, for whatever exists there to matter. That appears to have been sufficient.

The abandon White Ford Econoline

The van is parked neatly on the shoulder of the forest service road, pulled far enough off that it doesn't obstruct anything. There are no skid marks, no damage, no signs of a sudden stop. The engine is off, but the **key is still in the ignition**, turned back just far enough to rest. One door is unlocked. The others are closed.

Inside, the cab is orderly in the way of someone accustomed to long hours on the road. An **Oregon State Highway Map**, folded and creased, lies on the passenger seat, pencil markings visible along the routes. A small **plastic Hawaiian hula figure** is fixed to the dashboard, sun-faded and slightly loose at the base, the kind of cheap souvenir meant to be cheerful. It sways faintly when the door is opened.

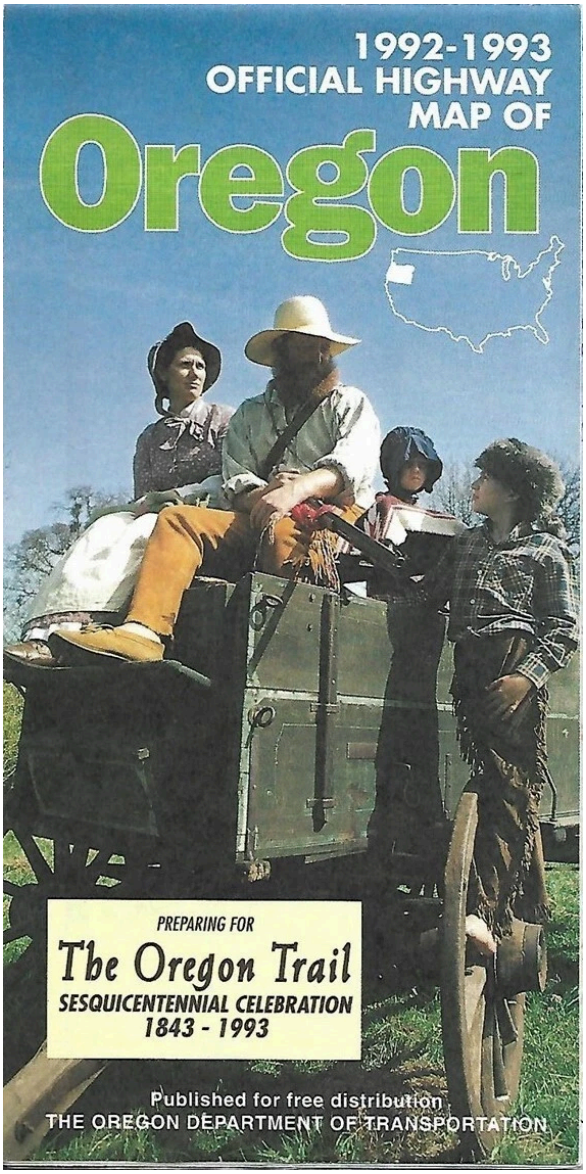
The **glove compartment** contains a handful of receipts, loose coins, a weak flashlight, and a paperback **anger management book**. The cover is bent, the spine cracked from use. Several

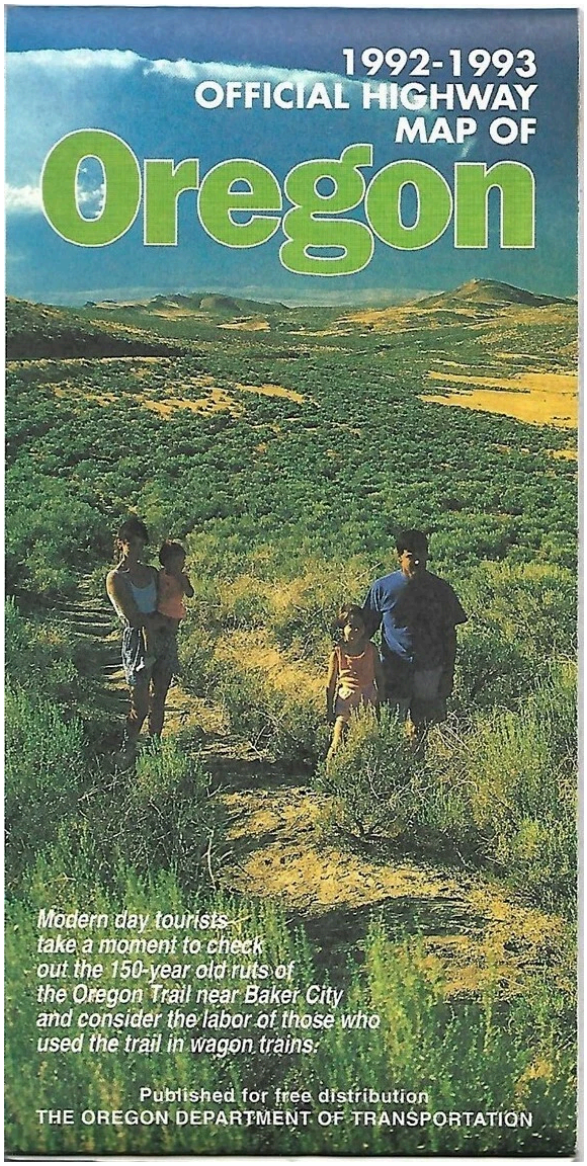
pages are dog-eared, and a scrap of paper marks a section near the middle. It doesn't look new. It looks like something the driver had been returning to.

The seats are worn but clean. There is no blood, no sign of a struggle, and no indication that anyone else was inside the vehicle.

In the back, the **cargo box** sits exactly where it should be, braced and secured. It hasn't been opened. The shipping label is intact, the tape unbroken, the contents undisturbed. Everything is arranged carefully, as if the driver expected to come back.

Behind the van, the gravel shows a set of footprints leading away from the road. They are shallow and evenly spaced, **a soft shoe trail**, not hurried and not erratic. The prints pass a locked gate and continue into the trees, where gravel gives way to pine needles and damp soil. The trail remains visible for a short distance, then thins and disappears into the forest.




1992-1993
OFFICIAL HIGHWAY
MAP OF
Oregon
Modern day tourists take a moment to check out the 150-year old ruts of the Oregon Trail near Baker City and consider the labor of those who used the trail in wagon trains.
Published for free distribution
THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The map is an official **Oregon State Highway Map (1992–1993)**, printed on thin paper and slightly yellowed with age. It has been folded many times, leaving deep creases. The corners

are soft, there are faint fingerprint smudges along the margins, and a small, dried coffee stain near one edge. Nothing about it appears unusual or ritualistic. It looks like a map that has been handled often and recently.

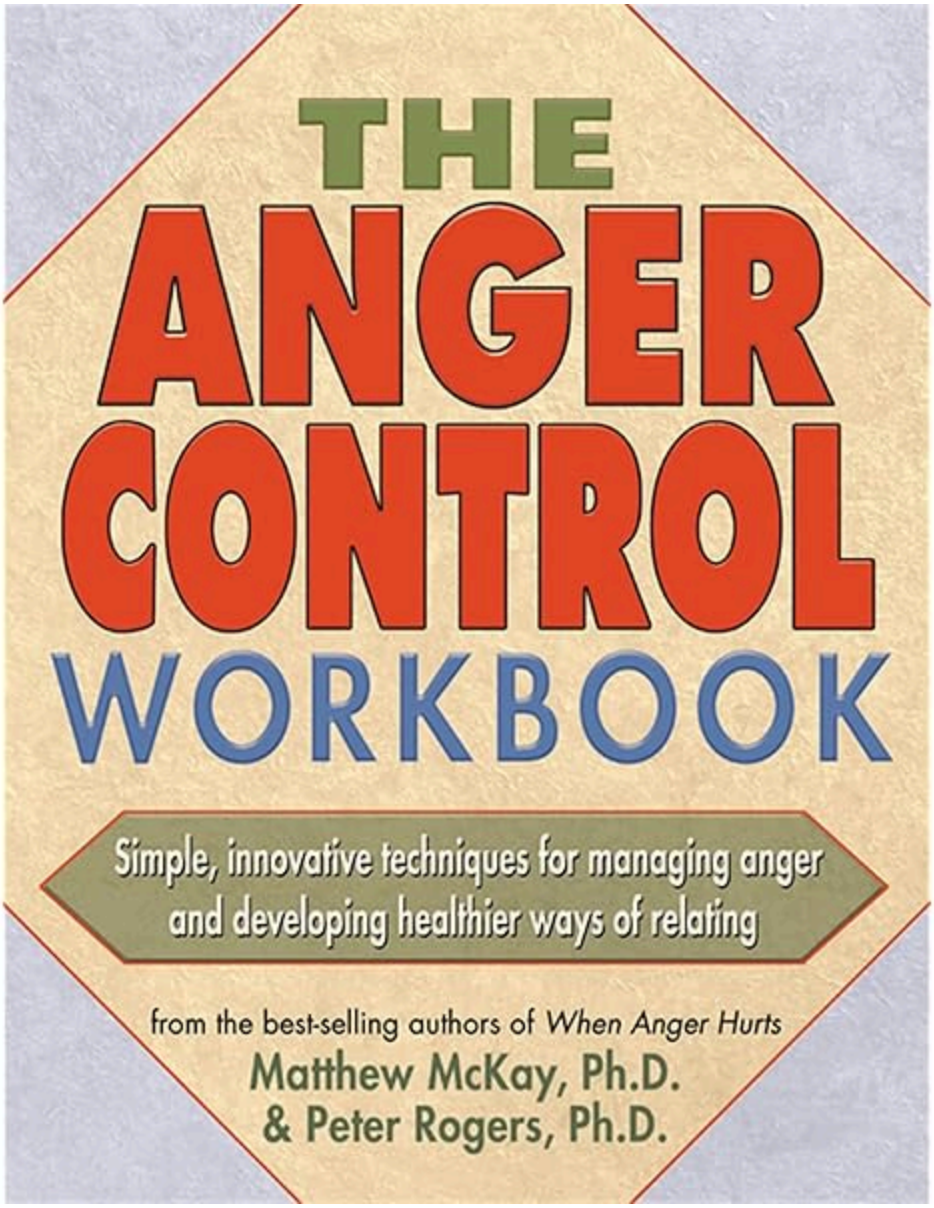
All markings are made in **light gray pencil**, careful but not heavy. The main route is clearly laid out: **Portland → Klamath Falls**, with **OR-58** circled through the Cascades. Near Portland, a small note reads *“early start.”* Around Eugene, another annotation says *“check-in done.”* Farther south and east, near the end of the route, **Klamath Falls** is underlined once with the note *“Depot.”* The handwriting is neat and controlled.

Just past Oakridge, a small pencil X marks the road with the note *“too early?”* A short distance later, another faint mark appears beside the route with the word *“continue.”* Farther along, written smaller and less confidently, is *“not here.”* None of these notes are emphasized. They feel provisional, as though written while deciding.

Two **Forest Service roads** east of Willamette Pass are lightly circled, barely noticeable unless examined closely. Beside one is the note *“just in case.”* Near another junction, the word *“maybe”* appears, then has been partially erased. At a forest intersection farther on, one road has been circled, then circled again, with part of the pencil line rubbed away. Next to it is a single word: *“no.”*

Near the eastern edge of the map, where the printed road network thins out, the pencil marks become more frequent. A short line is drawn along OR-58 with the note *“still going.”* Near the margin, where the paper is creased and worn, the final annotation appears, written smaller than the rest and pressed harder into the paper: *“can’t stop here.”*

Beyond that point, the map is blank.



The book in the glove compartment is a thin paperback, its cover dulled from handling. The title *The Anger Control Workbook*. It is printed in plain lettering, the kind used for manuals rather than self-help. There's no image on the front, just text and the names of the authors beneath it. The spine is creased, cracked in places, as if it's been opened and closed many times, then left alone for long stretches before being picked up again.

Inside, the pages are slightly warped from heat. Several corners are bent down. A few passages have been underlined in pencil, light enough that the marks almost disappear into the paper. The notes are practical rather than emotional: short phrases in the margins, checkmarks beside bullet points, a question mark next to a paragraph about delaying responses and choosing not to escalate. A scrap of paper, torn from something else, is tucked halfway through as a bookmark.

Nothing in the book feels urgent. It isn't about rage or violence. It's about restraint, about pausing, about avoiding situations that might lead to conflict. The exercises focus on

recognizing discomfort early and choosing the option that causes the least disruption. The kind of advice meant to keep things from getting worse.

The book looks like it’s been kept close, not because it was needed every day, but because it was meant to be there, something to reach for when the road got long, when patience wore thin, when stopping felt harder than continuing.

It rests back in the glove compartment among receipts and loose change, closed, as if it had already said everything it was going to say.